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## Press Release

### For Immediate Release

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### “Stay Fire Smart”

Fire Prevention Week was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire, the tragic 1871 conflagration that killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres. The fire began on October 8, but continued into and did most of its damage on October 9, 1871.

According to popular legend, the fire broke out after a cow - belonging to Mrs. Catherine O'Leary - kicked over a lamp, setting first the barn, then the whole city on fire. Chances are you've heard some version of this story yourself; people have been blaming the Great Chicago Fire on the cow and Mrs. O'Leary, for more than 130 years. But recent research by Chicago historian Robert Cromie has helped to debunk this version of events.

Those who survived the Chicago fires never forgot what they'd been through; both blazes produced countless tales of bravery and heroism. But the fires also changed the way that firefighters and public officials thought about fire safety.

In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson issued the first National Fire Prevention Day proclamation, and since 1922, Fire Prevention Week has been observed on the Sunday through Saturday period in which October 9 falls. According to the National Archives and Records Administration's Library Information Center, Fire Prevention Week is the longest running public health and safety observance on record. The President of the United States has signed a proclamation proclaiming a national observance during that week every year since 1925.

This year's Fire Prevention Week focuses on preventing painful burns while keeping homes safe from the leading causes of fire. The Norman Fire Department depends on the public to promote important messages that will keep your friends and family safe from the devastating effects of fire. To help pass on

the long fire service tradition of educating the public this year's theme for 2009 is: "Stay Fire Smart!"

The Norman Fire Department will once again be supporting this event with "Open House" at all Norman Fire Stations and with Fire Safety demonstrations at the Westside Wal-Mart on October 5-9 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. The Norman Fire Prevention Office will be educating the public with the Exit Drills in the Home (E.D.I.T.H.) Fire Safety Trailer and the new Bullex Fire Extinguisher Training System while all Norman fire stations will be open to the public for visitation and tours. Everyone stop by and see the firefighters, Sparky the Fire Dog and the Fire Inspectors as they pass on great information and help everyone stay fire safe.